

WASHINGTON D.C. – Today, House Appropriator Rep. Honda (CA-15) offered an amendment on the House floor to increase funding for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). Concerned with the complete elimination of SCAAP in the President's Fiscal Year 2010 budget request, and with bipartisan support from House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce Science and Justice Chairman Mollohan and Ranking minority member Frank Wolf, Rep Honda proposed an amendment to increase SCAAP funding to FY09 levels, or \$400 million.

Initially, SCAAP funding, which was reduced to zero in the President's budget, was boosted in the subcommittee to \$300 million at Rep. Honda's urging. Now, to increase this number to FY09 levels, Rep. Honda worked closely with Chairman Mollohan to submit an amendment that increases SCAAP funding by an additional \$100 million, for a total of \$400 million.

The SCAAP program, which reimburses states for the costs of incarcerating criminal aliens, requires the government to take all criminal aliens into federal custody. If this is not possible – which has been the case since the program was created – law requires the federal government to compensate state and local government for their incarceration costs.

The Government Accountability Office determined that states spend more than \$1.7 billion each year to incarcerate criminal aliens and Congress has reimbursed about 20 percent of these local expenditures over the years.

Rep Honda said, "California is currently being asked to shoulder too much of the government's burden. Our state has the largest number of incarcerated undocumented criminals of any state in the nation; the cost to California alone is nearly \$1 billion. At a time when California is experiencing unprecedented budget challenges, my state's taxpayers should not be burdened with funding incarceration costs of criminals, who are by law the responsibility of the federal government."

"SCAAP funding is too vital to cut," Rep Honda continued. "Without it, the burden results in cuts to many local law enforcement agencies including sheriffs, police officers, anti-gang violence units, and district attorney offices."